1: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

tains. From each pocket between these mountains an ice-cold affluent comes swirling down to the main river. The predominant tree in the river valleys is the cedar[4] which in many cases attains great girth and height. Cottonwoods flourish in places, and everywhere there is an almost impenetrable undergrowth of devil's club, berry bushes, and other shrubbery of almost tropical density. On the lower slopes of the mountains, moss-festooned pines and spruces are the most common trees, gradually becoming smaller and fewer until the barren peaks are reached. The mountains rise so precipitously that their snowcaps and glaciers seem to overhang the valley, a narrow ribbon of green winding far below. The range of vision from the bank of the river is limited by the all-encircling mountains. Here and there a distant vista opens up to expose peak after peak, but on the whole there is a feeling of confinement, in contrast with the open wastes of the upper country where the Bella Coola rises. Mountains, forests, flowing water, these are the three dominant impressions of the country (see Plate 6).

The mammals of central British Columbia, although comparatively common, have never been of primary importance. The marten, the wolverine, the lynx, and bears, both black and grizzly, were formerly hunted for their skins to serve as cloaks. Deer were killed whenever possible, but formed a negligible item of diet. The beaver also was prized for its flesh. The skins of moose and caribou were traded from the Carrier Indians, but neither of these animals was found in the Bella Coola area. The mammal of greatest economic importance was the mountain goat, the wool of which was woven into blankets. Smoked goat meat was formerly found in every house and was almost the only flesh available during the winter. Small game was abundant, but seals were a luxury. Neither were birds of great importance to the Bella Coola. Members of the tribe resident near the sea-coast used to kill

[4]Appendix C contains a glossary of the scientific names of the flora and fauna mentioned in this monograph.

2:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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APPENDIX A

MECHANICAL PROCESSES

NO attempt was made to study either the material culture of the Bella Coola, or their methods of manufacturing, but information on some points was obtained incidentally. All sociological and religious features connected therewith have already been described.

THE TAKING AND PREPARATION OF OLACHEN

The run of olachen, *sputɣ*, comes about the end of April, and as many as possible are caught. In preparation, nets, *älte'x*ʷ, are brought out from the boxes where they have been stored during the winter, examined, and repaired. If necessary, new ones must be manufactured out of nettle-(*lsna-*) fibre laid away by the women for this purpose. By rolling the material on their legs, they produce a thin twine; five strands of this are then interwoven, making a finished cord capable of resisting great strain. The nets are constructed by the men. The type used at the present time, which is said not to differ from that formerly employed, consists of a purse-like sack, oval in cross-section, open at the wider end and tapering very gradually to the other, which is closed. The total length is about thirty feet, the diameter at the open end about eight feet, and at the closed end about three feet. A new net is dipped in a mixture of boiled hemlock-bark to darken it, and then boiled in a solution of willow-bark to prevent the knots from slipping.

The setting out of a net is not an easy task, so two or three men agree to work as partners. In the present degenerate days, property rights are not respected and each group selects a suitable spot. The best location is where the water is about three feet deep and runs rapidly, but without ripples, over a smooth piece of the bottom; such a place is called a *skläɣ*. When the fish begin to run plentifully, the partners paddle out to set their net, taking with them four stakes, each about ten feet in length. The weight of a full net is tremendous, so the poles have to be driven down at least six feet, a difficult task on account of the stony bottom. Selecting the exact spot, one of four posts, *älkdjälos*, is set upright and held in position by being tied to a cross-piece, *nudjiqosta*, fastened to the canoe for the purpose. While his two partners hold the craft steady, the third man begins to pound down the stake; metal mauls are now commonly used, but in former times this work was always done with an unhafted stone maul, *lsxwoma*. The fishermen relieve one another intermittently until the top of the pole has been driven down to within